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ABSTRACT

Students in this remedial reading program were given a chance to "turnabout" through the use of innovative materials and methods used in the program. Remedial instruction in reading and all the language arts was provided. The program utilized three paraprofessionals. The Random House High Intensity Training System was used with 180 fourth through sixth grade students selected to participate in the program because they were at least six months below grade level in reading. The Metropolitan Achievement Test was administered during the first and last week of the program as a diagnostic and assessment instrument. This evaluation report concluded that students in the program increased their reading performance as measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Test. Also, students used library resources more than they had the previous year and expressed favorable attitudes toward the program staff. The reading attitude assessment scale used for the evaluation is included as an appendix. (Author/JP)

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EVALUATION REPORT

Function No. BE# 20-63403

PROJECT TURNABOUT

SCHOOL YEAR 1975 - 1976

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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An Evaluation of Selected New York City Umbrella Programs funded under a Special Grant ot the New York State Legislature performed for the Board of Education of the City of New York for the 1975-1976 school year

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PROJECT "TURNABOUT"

Chapter I: THE PROGRAM

This program was designed to meet the remedial reading needs of children in P.S. 107, Flushing, Queens, (District 24). Remedial instruction in reading and all language arts was provided. The program utilized three paraprofessionals who administered the Random House High Intensity Training System (HILS). These paraprofessionals serviced the children in grades 4-6, approximately 180 children who were at least 6 months below grade in reading. Additionally, the licensed teacher worked with paraprofessional staff to develop individualized programs for heterogeneously grouped classes. The balance of the remediation effort was to be spent in assisting the school librarian in the media center (library).

The reading activities consisted of administering the Metropolitan Achievement Test during the first week of the program and the last week. This test was used as an evaluative tool as well as a preliminary diagnosis of individual learning problems. Upon entering the program the students were given six to ten check-in tests and prescriptions were selected for those areas where the student scored 50%-80%. The Catalogue described each instructional objective and lists prescriptions for each student. The prescriptions were drawn from S.R.A., Singer, Random House, Word Pacers, as well as other basal materials as needed. Each student worked on his prescription and was provided direct individual instruction when necessary. Then each student took a check-out test to determine the extent to which he achieved the unit instructional objective. The results were recorded in the student work book. Subsequently, new individualized prescriptions were developed.

This program sought to meet the needs of those students who belong in individualized classrooms and also traditional classrooms. This was done by remediation in self-contained, traditional classrooms and individualized instruction in the individualized classroom.

It was intended to give youngsters who have failed, or were failing with traditional approaches to reading, a chance to

"Turnabout" by using new materials (High Intensity Learning System) and a more meaningful approach (Individualized Programming).

All sixth grade students chosen for the program were selected because they were at least six months below grade level. Approximately one half of the fourth and fifth grade students were also six months behind in reading. The other half were at or slightly below their grade level. These students were targeted because it was felt that many of them would end up further behind by the time they reached the sixth grade.

Dissemination of information about the program was to take place at parent-principal "coffee hours" and P.T.A. meetings.

The program began 10/14/75. The pretest was administered 11/24/76 and the post-test was performed 5/30/76. The program terminated 6/30/76.

Chapter II: EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Evaluation Objective #1: To determine whether, as a result of participation in the "Turnabout" reading program, the reading grade of the students will show a statistically significant difference between the real post-test score and the anticipated post-test score using the Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) as a performance measure.

1.1 Subjects: All 4-6 grades in the program.

1.2 Methods and Procedures: The appropiate level of the MAT will be administered twice; the first week of program, and again during the last week of the program.

1.3 Analysis of Data: Data will be analyzed by the "real (treatment) post-test vs. anticipated (without treatment) post-test" design using the historical regression rate adjusted for the term of the program.

Evaluation Objective # 2: Sixty per cent of the participants in the program who attended seventy five per cent of the program sessions would use library materials to a greater degree than previous.

This objective was measured by school library records and teacher observation. In addition, a Pupil Reading Attitude Assessment Scale was developed which used student self report as an index of achievement in this area (See Appendix, Table 1,

question #4).

Optional Evaluation Objective # 3: Student attitudes towards reading, staff and program elements were measured. There were 148 children who completed the Reading Attitude Assessment Scale (See Appendix, Table 1).

Optional Evaluation Objective # 4: An additional administrative objective was analyzed as an optional concept. Namely, the adequacy of the paraprofessional educational assistants in performing the primary tasks necessary for the High Intensity Learning System.

Educational assistant staff rated nine primary tasks (See Appendix, Table 2). They rated their jobs on three dimensions; A. Knowledge B. Importance C. Their Own Ability. A five point rating scale was used, (See Appendix, Table 2) with four as the highest level and zero as the lowest score. All educational assistants (3) completed the ratings.

Chapter III: FINDINGS

Project Objective # 1: 80% of those participants in the program attending 75% or more of the program sessions will make significant gain in reading achievement above their normal anticipated rate as measured by the administration of the 1975 Metropolitan Achievement Test as a post-test.

The pretest was administered 11/24/75 to 172 children and posttest was given 5/20/76 to 163 children. Nine children transfered to other schools, which meant that every child who began the program and remained enrolled in the school received the posttest.

TABLE I

Historical Regression Design (Grades 4-6)

Test Used	Total N	Pretest Date	Pretest Mean	Predicted Posttest Mean	Actual Posttest Date	Actual Posttest Mean
MAT	163	11/24	4.01	4.25	5/30	4.42

Statistical Data

obtained value of $t = 2.25$

level of significance, $p < .025$

As can be seen in Table I there was a statistically significant increase for the 163 students enrolled in the program. These results obtained even though the new High Intensity materials arrived February 1, 1976 due to the necessity for processing a proposal modification. However, the educational assistants conducted remedial sessions in the interim.

The period between February 1 1976 and June 30, 1976 witnessed the arrival of additional reading resource materials. The full resources of the program were not available for the entire school year. Nevertheless, the following reading changes were effectuated, see Table II below for grades 4-6.

TABLE II

Reading Change in Months (based on MAT)

Months	Frequency	Months	Frequency
-8 to -4	4	10 to 14	22
-4 to 0	33	15 to 19	6
1 to 4	52	20 to 24	0
5 to 9	44	25 or more	2

Based on the MAT, 45% of the students increased their reading level one year or more. Two students gained in excess of two and a half years. For 23% of the students there was no gain or a loss in reading performance. It was hypothesized that one of the factors that could contribute to such a loss would be school attendance. This factor was analyzed but no correlation with reading scores was obtained. Further speculation as to the possible cause of reading decrements must await the gathering of information for specific psychological, social and economic factors.

Project Objective # 2: 60% of those participants in the program attending 75% or more of the program sessions will utilize materials to a greater degree than previous to the inception of the program as measured by library records kept by the school and by the observations of the teachers.

This objective was not entirely met since the school multimedia center was not in operation for the 1975-76 school year. However, the educational assistants did go to each classroom with

library materials although no elaborate documentation was kept.

Optional Project Objective # 3: The measurement of student attitudes towards reading as a consequence of participation in in Project "Turnabout."

The pupil response to the attitude assessment scale indicated that they perceived the program and staff as fair, concerned and providing a team approach. The group who had the worst expressed attitude, namely "others were always goofing", had received a new classroom teacher midway through the program. An examination of the class reading scores indicated that this group also had the smallest increase of any class in the program. The survey showed that negative attitudes toward reading were related to performance. However, whether this was an adjustment reaction to a new teacher or the result of other variables has not been determined. Some students expressed generally negative attitudes, however, names were not required for the survey in the interests of honesty, so only class generalizations were possible. It does point up the need to overcome some pupil orientations which are highly negative. Other kinds of intervention may be more productive with this group than reading alone.

Optional Project Objective # 4: A self-evaluative instrument was administered to judge the adequacy of educational staff assistants. This was a job analysis developed by the evaluator. The task inventory methodology revealed that most aspects of the program were carried out as designed. However, the use of the wall-chart had been eliminated. This was due to the feeling on the part of the staff that it would result in undesireable levels of competitiveness. The designers of the program view it as another form of feedback (motivation) that progress was made in instructional objectives. This wall-chart recording as well as recording results in the student workbook was regarded as a clerical function, therefore not so very important.

The task of going to classroom library and observe students was only performed by two paraprofessionals. This was probably due to the fact that one of the staff had resigned in the midst of the program and an attempt to learn the intricacies of

the HILS was given first priority.

The task analysis revealed that the educational assistant of Project "Turnabout" dealt with teachers only. The classroom teachers worked with parents, in order to provide a more balanced view of the pupils.

Physical Facilities: The small tables and movable chairs which were provided seemed adequate to the task of small group instruction and individualization of the program. Interest areas for tape recorders and other multi-media material centers were also in evidence. The space alloted per pupil was adequate.

Information Dissemination: Information concerning the program was disseminated by the principal at coffee hours with the parents, which the evaluator attended. This provided a worthwhile, informal means of accquainting concerned parents with innovative concepts in reading remediation and should be continued.

Chapter 4: SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary:

Project Objective # 1: There was a statistically significant increase in reading performance as measured by the Metropolitan Achievement Test.

Project Objective # 2: Over 50% of these students reported an increase in public library usuage over the previous year, using a self report measure. The multi-media center (school library) was not opened during the school year so this objective was met by educational assistant staff, who went to each classroom with supplemental materials

Optional Project Objective # 3: The expressed attitude of the students towards the program, materials and staff was highly favorable. Teaching by instructional objective, small group instruction and one to one instruction created a team approach atmosphere. There were students who did not, however, share this more general viewpoint.

Optional Objective # 4: The task inventory methodology revealed that the High Intensity Learning System was implemented as designed except for wall-chart recording. Not all materials were available for the entire length of the program. The program was evaluated from October 1975 to June 1976.

Conclusions: Based on the methodology employed, there was a significant change in student measured performance in reading. Paraprofessional staff provided a highly effective, quality program for students in grade 4-6 who were below level in reading. Students expressed attitudes toward the program, materials and staff were highly favorable.

The majority of the students responding to the attitude questionnaire described themselves as being more confident in learning reading skills and more able in using the public library (See Appendix, Table I).

Recommendations:

1. An ongoing evaluation system which would seek to identify the lower 23% of the students who were not benefiting from the program. This would mean approximately forty students would have to receive some additional service. The nature of this service is indeterminate at this time, but should be directed at individual needs, in keeping with the program philosophy.

2. The notion of early intervention as an important factor in learning suggests that lower grade children be included in the program. It is recommended that the HILS system be extended to second and third grade pupils.

3. Every effort must be made to operate the multi-media center (library) for the next school year as an integral part of the program.

4. Continue principal/parent coffee hours as a means of disseminating information concerning this program.

5. The target population of below reading grade children be extended to include all sixth grade students who might benefit from a reading enrichment program.

6. Although the materials used were adequate, appropiate money to obtain all materials covered by HILS.

7. Although the space allotted was adequate, more specialized interest centers and audio-visual materials may increase student needs for additional space.

8. This program should be continued since the late funding and arrival of material suggests that the technology employed may be even more favorable when used for an entire school year.

APPENDIX

Table 1: Summary of Reading Attitude Assessment Scale, Completed By 148 Students in Project "Turnabout".
Note: Frequencies of response are summated in parenthesis (f) above each scale designation.

1. How much do you think your teachers care about your reading problems and needs?

(1)	(16)	(18)	(14)	(99)
1	2	3	4	5
completely uncaring	sometimes caring	caring	quite caring	extremely caring

2. In terms of time and attention which teachers devote to the students of the special reading program, do you receive?

(7)	(17)	(74)	(15)	(36)
1	2	3	4	5
much less than your fair share	somewhat less than your fair share	your fair share	somewhat more than your fair share	much more than your fair share

3. How much intrest do you have in "taking your medicine" prescribed by the teachers of the special reading program?

(3)	(11)	(42)	(45)	(45)
1	2	3	4	5
no interest	very little interest	some interest	very interested	extremely interested

4. As a result of being in the reading program do you feel more or less able to use the library? (We mean the public library, since the school library is closed.)

(6)	(12)	(44)	(30)	(53)
1	2	3	4	5
much less	somewhat less	about the same	somewhat more	much more

5. How much do you feel other students are "goofing off" in taking responsibility for their reading improvement?

(9)	(50)	(39)	(9)	(35)
1	2	3	4	5
not goofing	very little goofing	fair amount of goofing	a great deal of goofing	always goofing

Table 1 Continued:

6. How much confidence do you have in your ability to learn new reading skills?

(2)	(6)	(30)	(44)	(64)
1	2	3	4	5
No confidence	very little confidence	some confidence	much confidence	totally confident

7. How much more time are you spending reading newspapers, books, magazines, etc. this school year than last?

(7)	(11)	(31)	(42)	(54)
1	2	3	5	5
none	somewhat less	about the same time	somewhat more	much more time

8. Do you feel free to discuss reading done at school with most people (friends, parents, relatives)?

(9)	(21)	(50)	(33)	(31)
1	2	3	4	5
very uncomfortable	somewhat uncomfortable	comfortable	very comfortable	extremely comfortable

9. How are you doing in reading compared with how you are doing with your other subjects?

(3)	(7)	(21)	(82)	(32)
1	2	3	4	5
poorer	somewhat worse	same	better	far superior

10. Do you feel there is team work between you and the teachers in the reading program?

(12)	(13)	(35)	(35)	(48)
1	2	3	4	5
no team work	very little	some teamwork	a great deal	the most

A. What do you like most about reading in the Resource Room?

The most usual response was one of the workbooks or other materials.

B. What do you like least about reading in the Resource Room?

The check in and check out tests.

Table 2: Task Inventory Rating Scale

A. Knowledge Statements

4- A thorough and detailed knowledge of this is required to do my job.

3- Some degree of specialized knowledge required.

2- Only a general knowledge of functional relations, is required.

1- Some familiarity is probably desired but not required.

0- This is not required for my job.

B. Task Statements

4- Absolutely necessary part of my job.

3- Very important part of my job.

2- Desireable but not critically important that I do this.

1- Slight importance to do this.

0- Not a part of my job.

C. Self Rating of Task Capability

4- I can do this as well as anyone.

3- I have something to learn.

2- I am fairly proficient.

1- I am below average proficiency on this.

0- I am not equipped to perform this task.

Task Inventory Ratings: Paraprofessional ratings based on

A. Knowledge B. Importance D. Their Own Ability

1. Place each student in program based on diagnostic test:

	Paraprofessional I	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	4	4	unknown
B.	4	4	4
C.	4	4	unknown

2. Give each student check in test and select prescription:

	Paraprofessional 1	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	4	4	4
B.	4	4	4
C.	4	4	3

Appendix

Table 2 continued:

3. Record results in student record form and wall chart:

	Paraprofessional 1	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	2	2	2
B.	2	2	2
C.	4	4	4

4. Teach catalogue use for achieving instructional objective:

	Paraprofessional 1	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	4	4	4
B.	4	4	4
C.	4	4	3

5. Select and assign prescription and follow up:

	Paraprofessional 1	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	4	4	4
B.	4	4	4
C.	4	4	3

6. Circle prescription for student and provide instruction.

	Paraprofessional 1	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	3	4	4
B.	4	3	4
C.	4	4	4

7. Administer check out test and record results:

	Paraprofessional 1	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	3	3	3
B.	3	2	3
C.	4	4	4

8. When student fails provide assisstance according to step 6.

	Paraprofessional 1	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	4	4	4
B.	4	4	4
C.	4	4	3

9. Go to classroom library and observe students:

	Paraprofessional 1	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	4	4	unknown
B.	4	4	unknown
C.	4	4	unknown

10. Coordinate individual programs with classroom teacher:

	Paraprofessional 1	Paraprofessional 2	Paraprofessional 3
A.	4	4	4
B	4	4	4
C.	4	4	4